

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Southern District of Texas

United States of America

v.

Antonio Josue LOPEZ Perez (Y.O.B. 1992)  
Citizenship: Mexico

Case No. 7:19-MJ-0588

Defendant(s)

## CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of March 10, 2019 in the county of Hidalgo in the  
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

## Code Section

## Offense Description

21 USC § 952  
21 USC § 841

knowingly and intentionally import into the United States from Mexico approximately 13.42 kilograms of cocaine, a Schedule II controlled substance, and did knowingly and intentionally possess with the intent to distribute approximately 13.42 kilograms of cocaine, a Schedule II controlled substance.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attachment A

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Evan Ratcliff, HSI Special Agent

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: 03/11/2019 - 8:29 a.m.



Judge's signature

City and state: McAllen, Texas

Juan Alanis, U.S. Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

**Attachment A**

On March 10, 2019, at approximately 0947 HRS, Antonio Josue LOPEZ Perez, a Citizen of Mexico, arrived at the Pharr, Texas, Port of Entry (POE) driving a grey Mercedes Benz A1980 displaying Tamaulipas license plate XKH3302 seeking entry into the United States. During his inspection, United States Customs and Border Protection Officer (CBPO) Juan Sifuentes obtained a negative oral declaration from LOPEZ Perez for plants, meats, vegetables, drugs, firearms, and money in excess of \$10,000. Due to a lookout which had been placed on this vehicle, he referred the Mercedes to the secondary inspection area. At secondary inspection, CBPOs observed tampering near the gas tank, received a positive K9 alert for the presence of narcotics, and conducted an x-ray scan of the vehicle resulting in his observance of anomalies between the gas tank and under the back seat. CBPOs ultimately extracted 12 plastic-wrapped packages from under the back seat of the vehicle containing a white, powdery substance that showed a positive presumptive test for cocaine using a narcotics field test kit. CBPOs also located an aftermarket GPS tracker affixed to the vehicle.

Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Special Agent (SA) Evan Ratcliff conducted a custodial interview with LOPEZ Perez. During the initial portion of the interview, LOPEZ Perez stated that he was driving to Austin, Texas, to buy items from various stores to bring back and sell in Mexico and denied any criminal associations. However, after over two hours of interview, LOPEZ Perez admitted that he had been given this Mercedes several months prior by a subject operating an organization in Mexico in return for LOPEZ Perez working for him. LOPEZ Perez stated that he had been asked on multiple occasions to drive to Austin, retrieve several thousand dollars in US currency, and then bring it back to Mexico without reporting the exportation. LOPEZ Perez stated he was originally suspicious that it was drug money and that he thought he was money laundering. During these trips, LOPEZ Perez said that he would be tasked by the organization to leave his hotel for an extended period of time to "check out" bars and restaurants, and would leave the car at the hotel. LOPEZ Perez admitted that on one occasion, he returned to the hotel and saw someone else from this organization, to whom he did not provide his car key, driving his Mercedes back into the parking lot.

LOPEZ Perez admitted that on this trip, the organizer, listed in his cell phone only as "Hi", paid him \$1,000 to drive from Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, Mexico, to a hotel in McAllen, Texas, where he would have to spend the night at a hotel. LOPEZ Perez stated that he was supposed to be away from the hotel for some time during the day, then pick up money from an unknown location in McAllen and bring it back to Mexico. LOPEZ Perez stated that he spent the night before at a hotel in Miguel Aleman, but could not provide a reasonable explanation as to his purpose there. LOPEZ Perez stated he left Miguel Aleman and drove into Reynosa where he crossed into the United States due to the fact that he thought the Pharr POE "asked less questions."

LOPEZ Perez was in possession of over \$900 in US currency and approximately \$3600 in Mexican pesos which yielded in a positive alert to the odor of narcotics by a CBP K9.